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26 February 2024

Dear Edward,

### **Appointments to the Scottish Land Commission**

Thank you for your letter dated 26 January in relation to media reporting of Michael Russell's proposed appointment to chair the Scottish Land Commission (SLC) on 1 December 2023.

I refer to my letter of 17 January outlining the final stages of the appointment process for the SLC. I subsequently became aware of the media interest surrounding Mr Russell's proposed appointment in the same way others did. I reiterate that officials in the Public Appointments Team (PAT) provided a courtesy update to all candidates on 4 December to thank them for attending the interview, and that the Committee had indicated that they would consider the appointments on 12 December. I have been advised that PAT officials informed all candidates of the outcome on the morning of 13 December.

As I advised in my letter of 31 January, Mr Russell's appointment as Chair and Land Commissioner commenced on 1 February 2024 and a full handover and induction process is underway.

Yours sincerely,

**MAIRI GOUGEON**

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